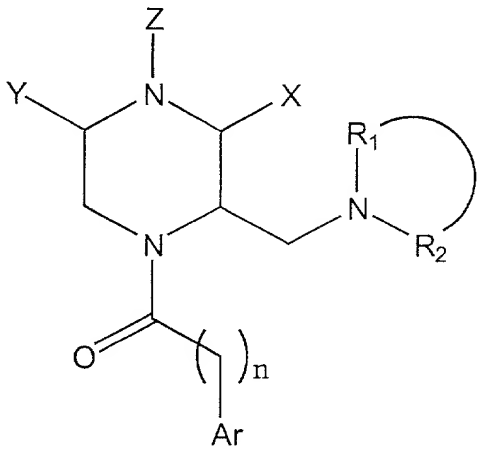
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A pharmaceutical composition for the prevention or treatment of pruritus comprising a compound of formula I or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



(I)

wherein

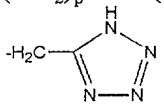
n = 1-3;

R_1 and R_2 are independently = CH_3 ;-$(CH_2)_m$, where m = 4-8, -$CH_2CH(OH)(CH_2)_2$-; -$CH_2CH(F)(CH_2)_2$-; -$(CH_2)_2O(CH_2)_2$-; or -$(CH_2)_2CH{=}CHCH_2$-;

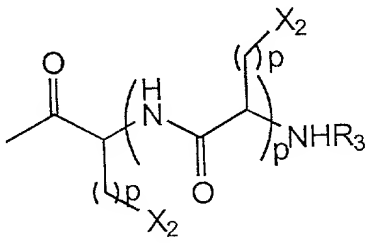
Ar = unsubstituted or mono-, or di-substituted phenyl wherein said substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, OCH_3, SO_2CH_3, CF_3, amino,alkyl, and 3,4-dichloro; benzothiophenyl; benzofuranyl; naphthyl; diphenyl methyl; or 9-fluorene;

Z is

-$P(O)(OBn)_2$; -$P(O)(OH)_2$; -$(CH_2)_pC(O)NHOH$; -$(CH_2)_pCO_2H$; -SO_2CH_3; - SO_2NH_2; -$CO(CH_2)_pCH(NH_2)(CO_2H)$; -$COCH(NH_2)(CH_2)_pCO_2H$; -$CO_2CH_3$; -$CONH_2$; -$(CH_2)_pO(CH_2)_pCO_2H$; -$(CH_2)_pO(CH_2)_pCONHOH$; -$(CH_2)_pNHSO_2CH_3$; -$(CH_2)_pNHC(S)NHCH(CO_2H)(CH_2)_pCO_2H$; -$(CH_2)_pSO_3H$; or



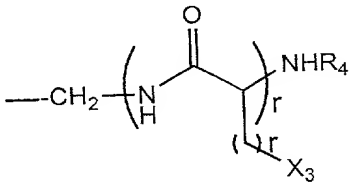
or Z is



wherein

p = 0-20;
R_3 = -H or -Ac;
X_2 = $-CO_2H$; $-NHSO_2CH_3$; $NHP(O)(OBn)_2$; $NHP(O)(OH)_2$;
$-OP(O)(OBn)_2$; or $OP(O)(OH)_2$;

X and Y are independently
$-CH_2NHSO_2CH_3$, $-CH_2NHP(O)(OBn)_2$, $-CH_2NHP(O)(OH)_2$, $-CH_2OP(O)(OBn)_2$,
$-CH_2OP(O)(OH)_2$, $-(CH_2)_qO(CH_2)_qCO_2H$, $-(CH_2)_qO(CH_2)_qSO_3H$,
$-(CH_2)_qO(CH_2)_qCHNHOH$,
$-CH_2NHC(S)NHCH(CO_2H)(CH_2)_qCO_2H$, or



wherein
q = 1-20
r = 1-20
R_4 = -H or -Ac
X_3 = $-CO_2H$; $-NHSO_2CH_3$; $-NHP(O)(OBn)_2$;
$-NHP(O)(OH)_2$; $-OP(O)(OBn)_2$; or
$-OP(O)(OH)_2$
in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

2. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of: {4-[1-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl-2R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazinyl}acetic acid; [1-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl-4-methanesulfonyl-2R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]piperazine; [4-S-Aspartic acid-α-amido-1-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-2R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]piperazine; Methyl-[2R-(O-2-acetic acid)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-3R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[2R-(O-S-aspartic acid-α-acetyl)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-3R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-2R-(N-

methanesulfonamido)aminomethyl-3R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-{4-[3,4-dichlorophenyl]acetyl-3R-[1-pyrrolidinyl]methyl-2R-[N-(succinic acid-2S-thioureido)]aminomethyl}-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[2S-(O-2-acetic acid)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[2S-(O-S-aspartic acid-α-acetyl)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-2S-(N-methanesulfonamido)aminomethyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-{4-[3,4-dichlorophenyl]acetyl-5R-[1-pyrrolidinyl]methyl-2S-[N-(succinic acid-2S-thioureido)]aminomethyl}-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[2R-(O-2-acetic acid)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[2R-(O-S-aspartic acid-α-acetyl)hydroxymethyl-4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; Methyl-[4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl-2R-(N-methanesulfonamido)aminomethyl-5R-(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate; and Methyl-{4-[3,4-dichlorophenyl]acetyl-5R-[1-pyrrolidinyl]methyl-2R-[N-(succinic acid-2S-thioureido)]aminomethyl}-1-piperazinecarboxylate.

3. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

(*R*)-4-(Phenylmethyl)-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-1-[(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-t-Butyl-acetyl-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-piperazine;

(*R*)-4-[(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-1-piperazineacetic acid dihydrochloride;

(*R*)-4- N-t-Boc-D-aspartic acid-β-benzyl ester-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -piperazine;

(*R*)-4-Aspartic acid-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-piperazine dihydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-(Diethoxyphosphonate)-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-Trifluoroacetyl-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]-piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-[(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -1-piperazinecarboxamide hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-[(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -1-piperazinecarboxaldehyde hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-[(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -1-piperazine-sulfonamide hydrochloride;

(*R*)-4-(4-Methylphenylsulfonyl)-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(3,4-dichlorophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl] -piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(4-methylsulfonylphenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(2-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(4-trifluoromethylphenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Methanesulfonyl-1-[(3-indolylacetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(4-methylsulfonylphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(4-trifluoromethylphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazinecarboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(3-indolyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(2-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(2-methoxyphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-Methyl 4-[(2-aminophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-1-piperazine-carboxylate dihydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(4-methylsulfonylphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]-piperazine hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-(4-trifluoromethylphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl] piperazinecarboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(2-trifluoromethylphenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl] piperazinecarboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(3-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(2-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride;

(*R,S*)-4-Acetyl-1-[(4-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-3-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)-methyl]piperazine-carboxylate hydrochloride; and

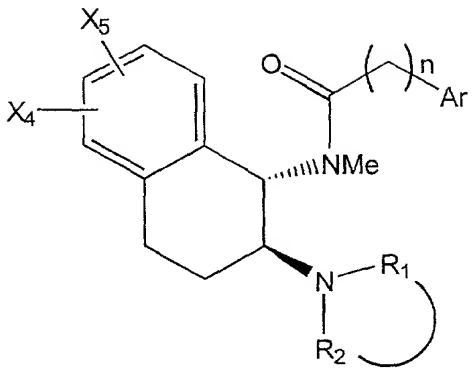
(*R,S*)-4-(Phenylmethyl)-1-[(4,5,-dichloro-2-nitrophenyl)acetyl]-2-[(1-pyrrolidinyl)methyl]piperazine dihydrochloride.

4. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 1.

5. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 2.

6. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 3.

7. A pharmaceutical composition for the prevention or treatment of pruritus comprising a compound of formula II or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



(II)

wherein

n = 1-3;

R_1 and R_2 are independently = CH_3 ;-$(CH_2)_m$, where m = 4-8, -$CH_2CH(OH)(CH_2)_2$-; -$CH_2CH(F)(CH_2)_2$-; -$(CH_2)_2O(CH_2)_2$-; or -$(CH_2)_2CH{=}CHCH_2$-;

Ar = unsubstituted or mono-, or di-substituted phenyl wherein said substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, OCH_3, SO_2CH_3, CF_3, amino,alkyl, and 3,4-dichloro; benzothiophenyl; benzofuranyl; naphthyl; diphenyl methyl; or 9-fluorene;

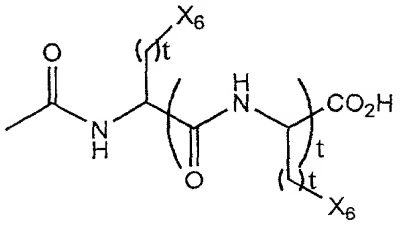
X_4 and X_5 are independently

-$OP(O)(OBn)_2$; -$OP(O)(OH)$,; -CO_2H; -SO_3H; -SO_3H; -$O(CH_2)_nCO_2H$;

-$NHSO_2CH_3$; -$CONH(CH_2)_sCO_2H$; or -$SO_2NH(CH_2)_sCO_2H$; wherein

s = 1-5

or X_4 and X_5 are independently



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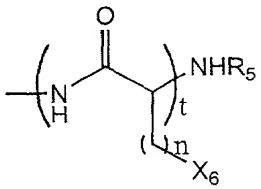

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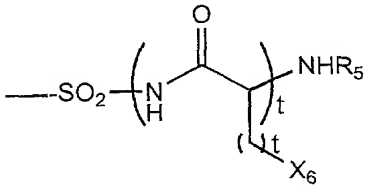


wherein

t = 1-20
R_5 = -H or -Ac
X_6 = $-CO_2H$; $-NHSO_2CH_3$; $-NHP(O)(OBn)_2$;
$-NHP(O)(OH)_2$; $-OP(O)(OBn)_2$; or
$-OP(O)(OH)_2$.
in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

8. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of: (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-5-(O-2-acetic acid)-hydroxy-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-7-(O-2-acetic acid)-hydroxy-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-7-(N-methanesulfonamido)-amino-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-5-(N-methanesulfonamido)-amino-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-5-(N-2-acetic acid)-carboxamido-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-5-(N-2-acetic acid)-sulfonamido-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-7-(N-2-acetic acid)-carboxamido-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide; and (±)-2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-1-[1,2,3,4-tetrahydro-7-(N-2-acetic acid)-sulfonamido-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)naphthyl]acetamide.

9. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

2-{7-[(±)-trans-1-(N-3,4-dichlorophenylacetamido-N-methylamino)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthoxy]}acetic acid;

2,2-Diphenyl-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-methoxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2,2-Diphenyl-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-hydroxy-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-nitro-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-nitro-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-amino-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(4-Methylsulfonylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-nitro-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[±]-trans-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]-7-[N,N-bis-(t-butoxycarbonylmethyl)-amino]-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl}acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[±]-trans-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]-7-[N,N-bis-(carboxymethyl)amino]-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl}acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[±]-trans-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]-7-[N,N-bis-(ethoxycarbonylmethyl)-amino]-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl}acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-(N-diethylphosphoramidato-amino)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[±]-trans-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]-7-[N-2-(diethylphosphoryl)ethyl-amino]-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl}acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-6-methoxy-7-(N-benzyl-N-methylaminosulfonyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-7-(N-benzyl-N-methylaminosulfonyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphth-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-indan-1-yl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4-trifluoromethylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-indan-1-yl]acetamide;

2,2-Diphenyl-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-indan-1-yl]acetamide; and

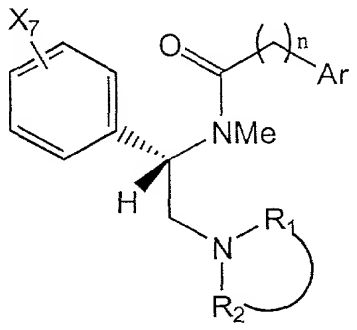
2-(4-Methylsulfonylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(±)-trans-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-indan-1-yl]acetamide.

10. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 7.

11. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 8.

12. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 9.

13. A pharmaceutical composition for the prevention or treatment of pruritus comprising a compound of the formula **III** or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



(III)

wherein

n = 1-3;
R_1 and R_2 are independently = CH_3 ;-$(CH_2)_m$, where m = 4-8, -$CH_2CH(OH)(CH_2)_2$-; -$CH_2CH(F)(CH_2)_2$-; -$(CH_2)_2O(CH_2)_2$-; or -$(CH_2)_2CH{=}CHCH_2$-;
Ar = unsubstituted or mono-, or di-substituted phenyl wherein said substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, OCH_3, SO_2CH_3, CF_3, amino,alkyl, and 3,4-dichloro; benzothiophenyl; benzofuranyl; naphthyl; diphenyl methyl; or 9-fluorene;

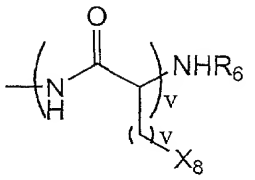
X_7 is

-$NHSO_2CH_3$; -$NHP(O)(OBn)_2$; -$NHP(O)(OH)_2$; -$(CH_2)_uNHSO_2CH_3$; -$(CH_2)_uNHC(S)NHCH(CO_2H)(CH_2)_uCO_2H$; - CONHOH; or -$(CH_2)_u$CONHOH;

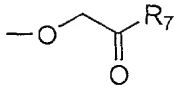
wherein

u = 1-5;

or X_7 is



; or



R_6 = -H or -Ac;
X_8 = $-CO_2H$; $-NHSO_2CH_3$; $-NHP(O)(OBn)_2$; $-NHP(O)(OH)_2$; $-OP(O)(OBn)_2$; or $-OP(O)(OH)_2$;

R_7 = $-NH(CH_2)_vCO_2H$; $-NH(CH_2)_vCH(NH_2)(CO_2H)$; $-NHCH(CO_2H)(CH_2)_vNH_2$; $-NH(CH_2)_vSO_3H$; $-NH(CH_2)_vPO_3H_2$; - $NH(CH_2)_vNHC(NH)NH_2$; or $-NHCH(CO_2H)(CH_2)_vCO_2H$; and
v = 1-20.

in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

14. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{1-[3-(N-2-acetic acid)carboxamido]phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl}acetamide; 2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{1-[3-(N-methanesulfonamido)aminomethyl]phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl}acetamide; 2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{1-[3-(N-succinic acid-2S-thioureido)aminomethyl]phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl}acetamide; and 2-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{1-[3-(N-2-acetic acid)sulfonamido]phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl}acetamide.

15. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-[N-(S-aspartic acid-α-amide-S-aspartic acid-α-amido)-3-aminophenyl]-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-[N-(bis-methylsulfonamido)-3-aminophenyl]-2-[1-pyrrolidinyl]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(2-Nitrophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-aminophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Diethyl phosphoramidate-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(N-diethyl phosphoramidate-3-aminophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Bis-sulfonamido-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(N-bis-sulfonamido-3-aminophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Methylsulfonylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Butyloxycarbonyl-4-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Bis-sulfonamido-4-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-nitrophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Bis-sulfonamido-4-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(3-aminophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Bis-sulfonamido-4-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-(N-diethyl phosphoramidate-3-aminophenyl)-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitrophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-phenyl-2-[1-(3S)-(3-hydroxypyrrolidinyl)]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-phenyl-2-[1-(3S)-(3-hydroxypyrrolidinyl)]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(4-Methylsulfonylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-phenyl-2-[1-(3S)-(3-hydroxypyrrolidinyl)]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-4-trifluoromethylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-phenyl-2-[1-(3S)-(3-hydroxypyrrolidinyl)]ethyl}acetamide;

2-(2-Amino-4-trifluoromethylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-{[1S]-1-phenyl-2-[1-(3S)-(3-hydroxypyrrolidinyl)]ethyl}acetamide;

2,2-Diphenyl-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

N',N'-Diphenyl-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]urea;

2-(2-Nitrophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro- 4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Methylsulfonylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Methoxyphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(3-Indolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(α,α,α-Trifluoro-p-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Nitro-α,α,α-Trifluoro-4-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(1-[4-Chlorobenzoyl)-5-methoxy-2-methyl indole)-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Nitrophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(3-Nitrophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Pyridyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(3-Pyridyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-((+)-6-Methoxy-α-methyl-2-napthalene)-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(α,α,α-Trifluoro-3-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Pyridyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(α,α,α-Trifluoro-2-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-((S)-(+)-4-Isobutyl-α-methylphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(3,4,5-Trimethoxyphenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-N,N-Dimethylsulfonamido-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Methylsulfonamido-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Amino 4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N,N-Dimethylsulfonamido-2-amino-4,5-dichlorophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Amino,α,α,α-Trifluoro-4-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-N,N-Dimethylsulfonamido-2-amino-α,α,α-trifluoro-4-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N-Methylsulfonamido-2-amino-α,α,α-trifluoro-4-tolyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(4-Aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N,N-Dimethylsulfonamido-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(N,N-Dimethylsulfonamido-2-aminophenyl)-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide;

2-(2-Hydroxyphenyl)-N-methyl-N-methyl-N-[(1S)-1-phenyl-2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)ethyl]acetamide; and

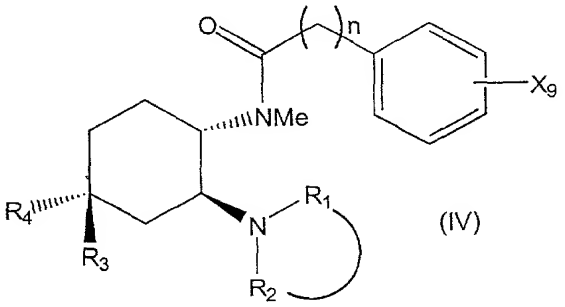
N-Methyl-N-[(1*S*)-1-phenyl-2-((3*S*)-3-hydroxypyrrolidine-1-yl)ethyl]-3,4,5-trimethoxyphenylacetamide.

16. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 13.

17. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 14.

18. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 15.

19. A pharmaceutical composition for the prevention or treatment of pruritus comprising a compound of the formula **IV** or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



(IV)

wherein

n = 1-3;

R_1 and R_2 are independently = CH_3 ;-$(CH_2)_m$, where m = 4-8, -$CH_2CH(OH)(CH_2)_2$-; -$CH_2CH(F)(CH_2)_2$-; -$(CH_2)_2O(CH_2)_2$-; or -$(CH_2)_2CH{=}CHCH_2$-;

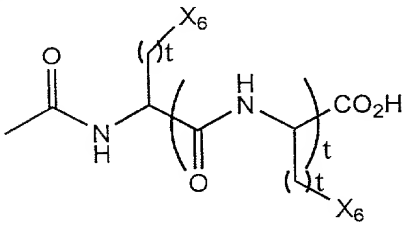
R_3 and R_4 are independently H; OCH_3; alkyl; or c-$O(CH_2)_2$;

X_9 = 1-4 substituents selected from the groups consisting of

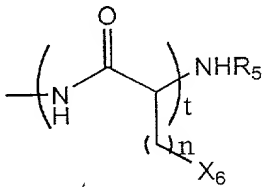
-halogen, -CF_3; -OCH_3; -$SO_2NH(CH_2)_qCO_2H$; -$CONH(CH_2)_qCO_2H$; -NH_2; -$NHSO_2CH_3$; - $NHP(O)(OBn)_2$; -$NHP(O)(OH)_2$; $NH(CH_2)_qCO_2H$; -SO_2CH_3; -$OP(O)(OBn)_2$; -$OP(O)(OH)_2$; -CO_2H; -$O(CH_2)_qCO_2H$; -$O(CH_2)_qSO_3H$, -$O(CH_2)_qOPO_3H_2$; wherein

q = 1-20;

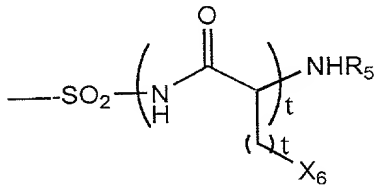
or X_9 is



; or



; or



wherein

t = 1-20;
R_5 = -H or -Ac;
X_6 = -CO_2H; -$NHSO_2CH_3$; -$NHP(O)(OBn)_2$; -$NHP(O)(OH)_2$; -$OP(O)(OBn)_2$; or -$OP(O)(OH)_2$.

in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.

20. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 19 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:
(-)-(5α,7α,8ß)-N-methyl-N-[7-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-1-oxaspiro-[4,5]dec-8-yl]-3-(N-methanesulfonamido)aminophenylacetamide; (-)-(5α,7α,8ß)-N-methyl-N-[7-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-1-oxaspiro-[4,5]dec-8-yl]-3-(N-2-acetic acid)sulfonamidophenylacetamide; and (-)-(5α,7α,8ß)-N-methyl-N-[7-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-1-oxaspiro-[4,5]dec-8-yl]-3-(N-2-acetic acid)carboxamidophenylacetamide.

21. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 19 wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of:

(±)-*trans*-2-Nitro-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Amino-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Nitro-4,5-dichloro-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Amino-4,5-dichloro-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Methanesulfonamido-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

N-[2-(±)-*trans*-N-Methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamido]glycine Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-4-Trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Nitro-4-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Amino-4-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Bismethanesulfonamido-4-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Methanesulfonamido-4-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

N-[2-(±)-*trans*-4-Trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamido]glycine Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-3-Trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-5-Nitro-3-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Nitro-3-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-2-Trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-4-Nitro-2-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-4-Amino-2-trifluoromethyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]-phenylacetamide Hydrochloride;

(±)-*trans*-N-Methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]2,2-diphenylacetamide Hydrochloride; and

(±)-*trans*-4-Methylsulfonyl-N-methyl-N-[2-(1-pyrrolidinyl)cyclohexyl]phenylacetamide Hydrochloride.

22. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 19.

23. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 20.

24. A method for the prevention or treatment of pruritus in a patient comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a composition according to claim 21.